

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

**Please rewrite the claims as follows:**

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*Cont*
1. (Currently Amended)      An image pickup apparatus comprising:
- an image pickup device which picks up an image of an object to be recorded;
- an operation ~~pickup~~ unit which controls said image pickup device, said operating ~~means~~ unit having a first operation and a second operation; and
- a white balance control unit, having a first information acquisition mode of acquiring information about white balance before said second operation by said operation unit and executing an image pickup operation of said image pickup device in accordance with said second operation of said operation unit at a timing after said first operation, and a second information acquisition mode of acquiring information about white balance in accordance with said second operation, wherein said white balance control unit controls white balance of an image picked up in accordance with said second operation, on the basis of the information about white balance obtained in said first and said second information acquisition operations.

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2. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising a display unit which displays an image picked up by said image pickup device, said white balance control unit controls white balance of the image displayed by said display unit, and the information about white balance acquired in the first information acquisition mode uses information about the white balance of the image displayed by said display unit.

3. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said white balance control unit computes information about white balance in the first information acquisition mode on the basis of an image picked up by said image pickup device at the first operation timing.

4. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 2, wherein said white balance control unit uses information about white balance which is used for controlling white balance of the image displayed by said display unit at the first operation, as information about white balance in the first information acquisition mode.

5. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said white balance control unit acquires information about white balance in the second information acquisition mode on the basis of the image picked up in accordance with the second operation.

6. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

a strobe unit which illuminates an object; and

a storage unit which stores information about white balance when said strobe unit illuminates the object, wherein said white balance control unit computes information about white balance of the image picked up in accordance with the second operation by using a white balance coefficient, as an initial value, which is obtained on the basis of information about white balance acquired on the basis of the first operation and information about white balance stored in said storage unit, when said white balance control unit causes said strobe unit to illuminate the object in the first information acquisition mode.

7. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 6, wherein said white balance control unit controls white balance of the image picked up in accordance with the second operation on the basis of a white balance coefficient computed on the basis of computed information about white balance and information about white balance stored in said storage unit, when said white balance control unit causes said strobe unit to illuminate the object in the first information acquisition mode.

8. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 6, wherein said white balance control unit controls white balance of the image picked

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up in accordance with the second operation on the basis of information about white balance acquired in the second information acquisition mode information about white balance stored in said storage unit, when said white balance control unit causes said strobe unit to illuminate the object in the second information acquisition mode.

9. (Previously Presented) An image pickup method comprising:

an image pickup step for picking up an image of an object to be recorded;

an operation step of operating an image pickup controlling image pickup of the object; and

a control step, having a first information acquisition mode of acquiring information about white balance before a second operation in said operation step and executing an image pickup operation in the image pickup step in accordance with said second operation in said operation step at a timing after a first operation in said operation step, and a second information acquisition mode of acquiring information about white balance in accordance with said second operation in said operation step, wherein said control step controls white balance of an image picked up in accordance with said second operation, on the basis of the information about white balance obtained in the first and second information acquisition operations.

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10. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 9, further comprising a display step of displaying an image picked up in the image pickup step, wherein said control step controls white balance of the displayed image, and the information about white balance acquired in the first information acquisition mode uses information about the white balance of the image displayed in said display step.

11. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 9, wherein said control step computes information about white balance in the first information acquisition mode on the basis of an image picked up in the image pickup step at the first operation.

12. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 10, wherein said control step uses information about white balance which is used for controlling white balance of the image displayed in said display step at the first operation timing, as information about white balance in the first information acquisition mode.

13. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 9, wherein said control step acquires information about white balance in the second information acquisition mode on the basis of the image picked up in accordance with the second operation.

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14. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 9, further comprising:

an illumination step of illuminating an object;

a storing step of storing information about white balance when the object is illuminated in said illumination step; and  
wherein said control step computes information about white balance of the image picked up in accordance with the second operation by using a white balance coefficient, as an initial value, which is obtained on the basis of information about white balance acquired on the basis of the first operation and stored information about white balance, when the object is illuminated in said illumination step in the first information acquisition mode.

15. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 14, wherein said control step controls white balance of the image picked up in accordance with the second operation on the basis of a white balance coefficient computed on the basis of computed information about white balance and stored information about white balance, when the object is illuminated in said illumination step in the first information acquisition mode.

16. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 14, wherein said control step controls white balance of the image picked up in

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accordance with the second operation on the basis of information about white balance acquired in the second information acquisition mode and stored information about white balance, when the object is illuminated in said illumination step in the second information acquisition mode.

17. (Previously Presented) A recording medium for computer-readable storing a program for executing an image pickup method, the image pickup method comprising:

an image pickup step for picking up an image of an object to be recorded;

an operation step of controlling image pickup of the object; and

a control step, having a first information acquisition mode of acquiring information about white balance before a second operation in said operation step and executing an image pickup operation in the image pickup step in accordance with said second operation in said operation step at a timing after said first operation in said operation step, and a second information acquisition mode of acquiring information about white balance in accordance with said second operation in said operation step, wherein said control step controls white balance of an image picked up in accordance with said second operation, on the basis of the information about white balance obtained in the first and second information acquisition operations.

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18. (Previously Presented) A medium according to claim 17, wherein the method further comprising a display step of displaying an image picked up in said image pickup step, said control step controls white balance of the displayed image, and the information about white balance acquired in the first information acquisition mode uses information about the white balance of the image displayed by said display step.

19. (Previously Presented) A medium according to claim 18, wherein said control step computes information about white balance in the first information acquisition mode on the basis of an image picked up in the image pickup means at the first operation.

20. (Previously Presented) A medium according to claim 18, wherein said control step uses information about white balance which is used for controlling white balance of the image displayed in the display step at the first operation timing, as information about white balance in the first information acquisition mode.

21. (Previously Presented) A medium according to claim 17, wherein said control step acquires information about white balance in the second information acquisition mode on the basis of the image picked up in accordance with the second operation.

22. (Previously Presented) A medium according to claim 17, wherein  
the method further comprising:

an illumination step of illuminating an object;

a storing step of storing information about white balance when the  
object is illuminated in said illumination step; and

computing information about white balance of the image picked up  
in accordance with the second operation by using a white balance  
coefficient, as an initial value, which is obtained on the basis of  
information about white balance acquired on the basis of the first  
operation and stored information about white balance, when the object is  
illuminated in said illumination step in the first information acquisition  
mode.

23. (Previously Presented) A medium according to claim 22, wherein  
said control step controls white balance of the image picked up in  
accordance with the second operation on the basis of a white balance  
coefficient computed on the basis of computed information about white  
balance and stored information about white balance, when the object is  
illuminated in said illumination step in the first information acquisition  
mode.

24. (Previously Presented) A medium according to claim 22, wherein  
said control step controls white balance of the image picked up in

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accordance with the second operation on the basis of information about white balance acquired in the second information acquisition mode and stored information about white balance, when the object is illuminated in said illumination step in the second information acquisition mode.

25. (Previously Added)      An image pickup apparatus comprising:  
an image pickup device which picks up an image of an object;  
a display unit which displays the image picked up by said image pickup device; and  
a white balance control unit which performs white balance processing on the image,  
wherein the white balance processing performed by said white balance control unit is switched in accordance with on and off of said display unit.

26. (Previously Added)      An apparatus according to claim 25, further comprising a strobe unit which illuminates the object, wherein the white balance processing performed by said white balance control unit is switched in accordance with on and off of said strobe unit.

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